

THE
BATTLE OF GREAT BETHEL.

(FOUGHT JUNE 10, 1861.)

BY

FRANK. I. WILSON.

Invaders! vain your battles' steel and fire!
Choose ye the morrow's doom—
A prison or a grave.

HALLECK.

RALEIGH, N. C.:

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BY FRANK. L. WILSON,

In the Clerk's office of the District Court of the Confederate
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RALEIGH, N. C. :

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PREFATORY.

"The Battle of Great Bethel" has been written partly to do honor to the gallant men engaged in it, and partly to rebuke the low and envious feelings of some who have ever withheld, so far as they could, justice to North-Carolina and her sons. If I have used strong language, it has been because the occasion has warranted it. If I have spoken plainly it has been because the wrongs, or attempted wrongs, of North-Carolina have been plain. It has not been my aim to vindicate the character of my State; for it needs no vindication. Envy of her high estate is the parent of all the attempted injustice to her; and the contemptible assaults made upon her, or the no less contemptible omission, wilfully, to do her justice, to say nothing of the meanness of either "damning her with faint praise," or remaining silent over her glorious deeds, constitute one of her excellencies of which she may be justly proud. "Malicious Envy," so well described by Spencer, is the enemy whose puny shafts are hurled at North-Carolina.

"Malicious Envy rode

Upon a ravenous wolfe, and still did chaw
Between his cankered teeth a venomous tode,
That all the poison ran about his jaw;
But inwardly he chewed his own maw
At neighbor's wealth that made him ever sad,
For death it was when any good he saw,
And wept, that cause of weeping none he had;
And when he heard of harm he waxed wondrous glad."

* * * * *

"Envy with a pale and meagre face *
* * stood shooting at stars, whose darts fell down
Again on his own face."

LILLY'S *Endymion*.

"Base Envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach."

THOMSON'S *Seasons*.

The Battle of Great Bethel was one of the most remarkable on record. I have not attempted a full and detailed history of it, but have only noticed such portions of it as comported with my plan. The fact that one thousand citizens, converted in a few days into soldiers, should meet and defeat five times their number, killing and wounding five or six hundred of the enemy, with the loss of but *one man*, indeed sounds more like romance than history; but truthful history will place it, through all future time, as one among the richest jewels in North-Carolina's coronet of glory.

THE AUTHOR.

RALEIGH, N. C., September 25, 1864.

BATTLE OF GREAT BETHEL.

IN front of you stands an old Church, its roof greening with the moss of ages. From that humble building, for many generations, has gone up the sound of prayer, of praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God; and from that rude old pulpit, from time to time, for a long series of years, the Gospel has been preached: Christ and Him crucified, peace on earth and good will toward men.

Look now to your left. That forest of tombstones, those numerous mounds—some red with the freshly upturned earth, and others green with the young grass, tell you that there is situated a section of the Great City of the Silent Dead. The rich with the lofty monumental column; the poor with the humble marble or still humbler headrock; the old and the young; the saint and the sinner, are all on an equality here, side by side, their bodies resolving into their original elements. Once they listened to the word of God in that old Church, some unto salvation, and some unto condemnation. Now they are dust, alike.

How calm, how quiet, how peaceful is the scene! The old Church—the grave-yard—the tall old oaks waving their branches in the gentle breeze, and the

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tiny insects buzzing with a low murmur around—the sun just looking forth from his Eastern couch, silvering the dewdrops as they hang suspended from the leaves or fall in sparkling splendor to the earth. How the soft wind of the early morn soothes and cools the heated brow! What a tranquilizing effect all these things have upon the soul! How the mind retires, as it were, into itself, to reflect, to meditate, to worship! How thickly throng the thoughts of Time and of Eternity, of Life and Death; and how the senses are all mellowed and softened as we gaze upon the scenery around us! Involuntarily the mind mounts from Nature up to Nature's God; and the spirit feels chastened, though calm and refined.

Now look to your right. O God; what a contrast! There is a long trench dug in the earth, and beyond it, in the dense woods, you see muskets stacked. Close by these muskets you see men in uniforms—in warlike array—ay, in line of battle, ready at a moment's notice to seize their arms and hurl the leaden death against any approaching foe. Wide-mouthed cannon also, are gaping, as if impatient to commence the work of destruction. There are officers, with swords gleaming in the light of the newly arisen sun of this glorious June morning, moving from point to point; and there, in the centre of the line, waves proudly the Battle Flag—the Stars and Bars of a young nation just feeling the first throes of its birth.

Recall for a moment the scene. Before you is the old Church; to your left is the quiet graveyard; to your right, O Heaven! is WAR. Thus on earth

mingle peace and strife; the Gospel and the sword; the sacred and profane; the quiet dead and the maddened living; the scenes of peace and the preparations for deadly conflict.

But the sounds of a horse's hoofs are heard in the distance, coming up upon the right at rapid speed. A moment more and horse and rider appear, dash through our lines, and halt at a certain tent. The reins are dropped, the rider dismounts and enters the tent.

"Colonel," said he, "the tale of the deserter is true. The enemy is advancing and will soon be upon us."

Orders are issued for the deserter to be brought before the Colonel, who thus addresses him:

"Your offense is pardoned. Go to your company, do your duty, and retrieve your character."*

A few moments more, and a noble steed, with holsters at the saddle bow, is led up to that tent. A man comes forth, a small man in stature, but every muscle well developed. A glance shows that he is inured to hardships, that his frame is strong and wiry and capable of great endurance. His brow is slightly contracted, his lips compressed, and his whole air thoughtful; but there is a battle-gleam in

*It will be remembered that the first news brought to our troops of the advance of the enemy, was brought by one of our soldiers who, in an evil hour, picqued at something, deserted. He soon repented his desertion, and fortunately obtaining information of the movements of the enemy, he bore back the information as a peace-offering. He had truly repented, and, as we have seen, was forgiven.

his eyes, and determination marks every feature. He looks at his Adjutant and says: "Captains to the centre."

He pats that gallant horse gently on the neck, strokes his forehead soothingly, speaks a few kindly words to him, and mounts. Slowly and thoughtfully he rides to the centre of the line. The Adjutant has done his duty, and the Captains are grouped together under that Battle Flag, anxiously awaiting him.

Let us look for a moment on that group of Captains. There stands a large-eyed, bold and manly form, mildness beaming in his countenance, but determination also stamped there. You see it mingling with his great good nature in the prominent eyes and in every feature. That is William W. McDowell, Captain of the "Buncombe Rifles." In peace he has been a lamb; in war he proved himself a lion.

Beside him stands a tall, rough-hewed, but manly form, reminding you of one of the granite rocks of his native mountains. He is courteous and affable, and a kindlier heart never throbbed within a manlier breast; but look into his eyes; trace those long and boldly developed lines that seam his countenance; and you will read bravery even to desperate daring, written there. That is C. M. Avery, Captain of the "Burke Rifles." Alas! he has sealed his devotion to his country's cause with his life.

Next to him is a form, not so tall, but well developed, with a tendency to corpulency. His light blue eyes bespeak a kindly nature, yet gleam with a light which tells you he possesses courage and

decision, while that broad prominent under jaw indicates that he is persistent in his resolves, and not easily swerved from them. That is William J. Hoke, Captain of the "Southern Stars," from Lincoln county.

By his side is a figure similar to his own, whose broad and placid face, just slightly browned and roughened by an Eastern sun and out-door exercise, shows that with its predominant expression of good nature and friendly feelings, is mingled qualities firm and unswerving, untiring and persistent. In peace he was characterized for energy—and so in in war. That is John L. Bridgers, Captain of the "Edgecombe Guards."

I regret that I cannot portray the other Captains, as I have never seen them; but facts attest that they were brave and true men; and I mention their names with the names of their respective companies: D. A. Bell, Captain of the "Enfield Blues," Halifax county; Wright Huske, Captain of the "Fayetteville Light Infantry," Cumberland county; J. B. Starr, Captain of the "Lafayette Light Infantry," Cumberland county; R. J. Ashe, Captain of the "Orange Light Infantry;" E. A. Ross, Captain of the "Charlotte Grays," and L. S. Williams, Captain of the "Hornets' Nest Rifles," both from Mecklenburg county.

It is a fact not only somewhat remarkable, but highly gratifying, that all sections of North-Carolina were represented in that one regiment. From the rugged mountains of the West, from the rolling and fertile lands of the Centre, and from the sea-washed

sands of the East, these gallant men had simultaneously sprung to arms when the first bugle-note of war was sounded. They had come together as brothers to "do or die;" and they have proved that the men of the West, of the Centre, and of the East, are alike brave and alike entitled to that wreath of glory that now encircles their brows, and that North-Carolina, through all her borders, has sons that will not only maintain her honor, but who have already, on many bloody fields, added intensity to the bright halo that has ever made radiant her untarnished fame.

Let witlings defame her—let hirelings abuse her—let cowards traduce her—let editors and high officials studiously avoid awarding her the well deserved meed of praise, and maliciously watch for every opportunity to cast a slur upon her—they are but the worthless rottenstone that polishes the pure gold of her character. Serene in her conscious majesty, her stream of fame flows on, one-half of it ruffled to form a tear of pity for her would-be defamers, the other half bright and tranquil as the stars that stud the heavens.

Pardon this digression.

The little man on horseback rides up to the assembled Captains, and speaks :

"Comrades, a courier has just arrived with the certain intelligence that the enemy is advancing against us in force. We will fight him here. Repair to your respective companies and have them ready for battle. I will be with you again in a few moments."

The captains return to their respective commands.

A light touch of the spur and that noble horse springs forward, bearing his rider out into the thick woods. We will follow him. There stands the horse, now and then impatiently champing his bit, pawing the earth and tossing his head; but he loves his master too well to leave him.

And where is that master? Look at the root of that great old oak, and you see him upon his knees. He is praying for strength, for guidance, and for victory. Above him wave the branches of the tall trees; the beams of the morning sun are peering as it were through loopholes in the dense green foliage, flickering over the earth as the gentle breeze stirs the overhanging boughs. What a lovely, what a pleasant, what a peaceable morning! Man may rage, but God ever smiles, heedless of the wrath of his puny creatures.

Presently that kneeling form arises. Again he pats the neck of his steed, mounts, and rides back to his lines. How those few moments have changed his aspect! His brow is now smooth and serene, and his whole countenance is placid; but that stamp of determination, that high resolve, and that firmness of purpose, still mark every feature, and that battle-gleam still lights his eye. He rides along his lines and addresses his brave North-Carolinians:

“Soldiers, the enemy is approaching in heavy force. In one or two hours—perhaps less—you will be engaged in battle. Remember you are North-Carolinians, and that the heretofore untarnished fame of your mother State is now in your hands. This battle is to be the first of a long series to be

fought on the soil of Virginia, and you should be proud that you now have the opportunity to honor yourselves and to reflect additional glory on your native State. Repose in me, as your commander, the confidence I repose in you as soldiers, and victory shall this day perch upon your Battle Flag, no matter what the odds against us."

Thus he rides along, uttering these or similar words to each company, and he is answered with shouts, and assurances that they will stand by him to the death. Then his eyes flash, his countenance grows animated, for he knows the battle-fever is raging in his ranks.

He approaches the few Virginians in his command and addresses them:

"Virginians, you stand upon your native soil and the foot of the foul invader pollutes it. Show yourselves this day worthy representatives of your great State, and let us all unite to hurl back the foe that now advances to make us its prey. Remember the many great and good heroes of your State, and emulate their deeds. 'Give us liberty or give us death,' be your motto."

Those gallant Virginians respond with cheers. The allusion to their great heroes has re-kindled the fires of their patriotism, and they are ready for the fray.

It is scarcely necessary for me to say that man was Col. DANIEL H. HILL, a native South-Carolinian, a brave and well educated soldier, and a Christian warrior. He doubtless has his faults, for no man is perfect; and whatever may be thought of some of

his writings, none can doubt his qualifications for fighting. I believe that but for a causeless howl raised against him by some individuals on our coast, when he had charge of that department, the foot of no invading Yankee would ever have found a resting place on North-Carolina soil. It was monstrous that Gen. Hill should require, for a short time, one-fourth the negro men of that section to work on fortifications; but that monstrosity pales before that of the Yankees, who have taken four-fifths of all negro men, women and children that they could lay hands on, together with the fertile lands once cultivated by those negroes, and have burned and destroyed millions of property, making a once plentiful and happy land, a desolation. Men are sometimes "penny wise and pound foolish," and alas! competency is too frequently set aside for incompetency, through the channels of favoritism, partizan preference, petty personal spite and envy. But we pass on.

Listen! A low, deep, heavy, hollow sound is heard in the distance. It is the rumbling of wheels; the measured tread of long columns of armed men; the beating of iron hoofs on the hard ground; and various other sounds incident to the marching of a large army. Nearer and nearer approach these sounds, mingled with the rattling of muskets and the jingling of swords; and now comes into view column after column, their muskets, swords and bayonets gleaming in the sun, and the blue uniforms looking like a cloud of destruction about to burst and overwhelm our little band, now grasping their

trusty arms. Ay, these gallant few can discern the once loved, but now detested Flag, prostituted to the base purposes of a tyrant and Abolition horde, who then made, and yet make it, the signal for civil war and cutting the throats of those once protected beneath its ample folds. Beneath it now is daily perpetrated deeds at which the very fiends stand aghast—deeds that have smelled rank to Heaven, and which will yet call down a retribution, in God's good time, upon the enactors, that will startle the world with the justness and vengeance of Almighty Power, since He and his laws have been set at defiance, His name blasphemed, and the worship of the *negro* substituted for that of Himself.

If the hearts of our little band fluttered faster than they did before, and if their blood coursed more rapidly through their veins than usual, fear was not the cause, but natural excitement that the calmest and bravest cannot wholly prevent. They may have grasped their arms more firmly,—they may have compressed their lips more tightly, and their eyes may have gleamed with unusual light; but these things only indicated spirits undismayed and souls resolved. There was no quailing—they were nerved for the contest, and ready for it.

Suddenly from the Richmond Howitzers belches forth the iron deaths. The columns of the advancing foe are rent and torn, but the gaps are closed and on they come. All at once the leaden messengers are hurled from a thousand rifles and muskets, and they strew the ground with dead and wounded Yankees. Five times as many are hurled at our

little Spartan band, but not a man is touched. One continued sheet of flame bursts along our front, and the work grows too hot for Yankee pluck, and they begin to show their backs. A shout goes up from our soldiers, and Yankee legs cannot outstrip our bullets. They fall at every step until beyond our reach, the Howitzers aiding the muskets in the work of death.

After a short breathing spell they again approach. Our dauntless heroes retire to their trenches. On come the gaudily dressed New-York Zouaves, with yells like savages, and savages they were in all except disregard for personal safety. Like all bad men they were apparently reckless, but in fact were cowards. Little did they think that, like the sacrifices of ancient times, they were bedecked and ornamented for the slaughter. A few volleys throw them into disorder. They glory in the work of killing, but being killed is a very different thing. They could gloat with fiendish satisfaction over the blood of others; but their coward hearts cannot bear the idea of having their own veins drained. Many have been the helpless and unarmed victims that have fallen beneath their assassin strokes. But here there are two sides to the question. While they would deal death to others, their craven spirits cannot bear the thought of having the compliment returned. The whistling of bullets has no music for their ears, though they could listen enraptured to the dying moans of the unoffending, slain for purposes of robbery or revenge.

In vain their Colonel, Waldrop, tries to rally

them. Elevating himself, with naked sword in hand, he curses them for cowards and tries to shame and exasperate them into bravery. Fool that he was, not to know that true valor dwells not in the bosoms of thieves and murderers. Fool that he was, not to know that such bosoms are insensible to shame. While waving his sword and heaping curses upon his flying scoundrels, a ball from a North-Carolina musket stretches him lifeless upon the ground. Those of his command able to run, ply their legs with might and main, scattered in all directions, and infusing their terror into others. They had physical force, but no true valor: the depraved are never brave. They are but beasts, and like all beasts they shrink instinctively from danger, with a wild horror in which all reason, all manliness, all self-possession is lost.

Meantime one of the Howitzers has been rendered useless, on another part of the line, by the breaking of a wire in the vent. Some hundreds of Yankees bravely rush upon the harmless piece and capture it. What a glorious deed! How renowned must they be in history! Have they not fearlessly rushed upon a piece of metal, that will not shoot, and dauntlessly laid their hands upon it? Have they not won an elephant, and a dead one at that? Who can blame them for yelling and shouting over the thought of the undying fame that must now forever couple their names with those of the renowned heroes of history?

Short-lived gratulation! As bounds the lion upon the more ignoble beasts that are feasting upon the

unresisting carcass provided for them by the valor of another, so springs Capt. Bridgers with his seventy-five Edgecombe Guards, upon the jubilant Yankees. As flee the meaner animals with reckless fright, so flee these valiant captors of the inoffensive gun. A charge *at* them is all—*upon* them requires a fleetness of courage superior to that of fear—something rarely found. The gleam of bayonets was disgusting to their sight, and they turned their backs to avoid seeing it, leaving behind them the prize for which they had expended so much breath in noisy shouts. But few of our men had been struck, and not a single one disabled.

Very soon it was perceived that the Yankees were effecting a lodgement in an old house, from which they could very much annoy us. Capt. Bridgers called for volunteers to set fire to the house. Five men sprang forward, young Henry L. Wyatt the foremost among them, each with a brand in his hand. They make a dash for the house, and young Wyatt falls, struck in the forehead by a ball. Scarcely is he upon the ground before his slayer is shot down, and the Yankees speedily evacuate the house. Again repulsed, there is a halt in the battle-storm.

Colonel HILL rides along his lines, his face beaming with pride and joy, and is greeted with cheers. Every soldier feels himself a hero. That natural dread which all must feel when going into battle, has worn off, and now they feel invincible. The laugh and joke go round, and all are merry. Many of the dead have been borne off, but they can see

many still lying where they fell, and they know their arms have been felt.

In about half an hour the enemy again advances, from a different direction, having made a considerable circuit, with the intention of flanking our men and getting in their rear. But their columns plunge into a deep morass, and they can neither advance nor retreat. Now does the carnival of death hold high revel in their ranks. In range of our marksmen, they fall by scores, some sinking into the slimy mud and water, the only graves they will ever know. All that can, struggle back, and make haste to put themselves out of reach of our guns. Like frightened sheep they scamper off, and infect their comrades with their own terror. A hasty, disorderly, and disgraceful retreat commences, our cannon accelerating their steps. Our men leap from their fortifications, and pursue the flying foe for several miles. The retreat becomes a route, and our victory is complete.

Thus was hurled back in blood and shame the glittering hosts of Yankee *chivalry*! that went forth so proudly to capture that handful of "ragged rebels." How must old Beast Butler have felt when he saw his troops returning crest-fallen, whipped! Doubtless if there had been a defenceless woman near him he would have insulted her, and felt as proud of it as his Puritan forefathers did of burning old women for witches, and punishing harmless Baptists and Quakers for worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

Our entire loss was one killed and seven slightly

wounded; that of the enemy was about three hundred killed and as many more wounded. It is true that we had the advantage of position, but that would have availed us but little but for our own superior valor and workmanship. Their balls, at times, flew thick and fast, but mostly far above the heads of our own troops, as if expecting to find them up trees.

Let it be remembered that the first blood shed in this war, in regular battle, was shed at the battle of Great Bethel; and let it also be remembered that the first blood of a Southern soldier that stained Confederate soil, was the blood of a North-Carolinian—young Wyatt, who knew not the meaning of fear, and was insensible to danger when and where duty called. He was but a private soldier, but no braver spirit has more nobly perished on the battle-field; whether clad in uniform or in humble garments. And from the day of his death the troops of North-Carolina seem to have emulated his example. They have been among the bravest and most reliable troops in our armies, and have been excelled by none. They have ever sprang with alacrity where duty called them, and by their steady firmness, their determined purpose, their resolve to conquer or die, they have accomplished deeds that will place them among the highest on the scroll of fame, when the truth of history shall be unrolled. For all this they have not sought praise—they only want justice, for justice itself is their highest praise. And little, indeed, the praise they have received, and that little apparently wrung from reluctant

tongues, envious pens, and begrudging hearts. On hundreds of bloody fields thousands of her best and bravest sons have fallen with their faces to the foe; and their heroism and self-devotion are unchronicled—their glorious deeds are as silent as their bloody graves.

Do North-Carolina troops achieve a victory, the newspapers nearest the scene of operations, either pass it over in silence or represent it as a small affair; or if they speak of the bravery of the troops, they strangely *forget* to tell what State the troops are from. If they meet with a reverse, which, thank God! is seldom, these same newspapers bruit it abroad, magnify it, and ring charges upon it with apparent delight.

It is not my purpose to retaliate by concealing the heroism of other troops, or by attempting to pluck one leaf from the wreath of honor that encircles their brows; but to contrast the conduct of those papers, and to show their (im)-partiality in chronicling faithfully the events of the day, I will say they have never yet published the facts that North-Carolina troops have, on two occasions at least, charged over the prostrate forms of troops of another State, and accomplished the work to which these prostrate soldiers could be neither led nor driven.

Let us look at a few recent events. Gen. Ramseur not long since met with a slight reverse near Winchester, Va. What degree of censure, if any, he merits I know not. But let him be fairly judged and acquitted or punished as he deserves; for I would screen no officer or soldier from merited cen-

sure, whether from North-Carolina or elsewhere. But certain newspapers in and around the seat of Government, seized upon the affair, held it up as "Ramseur's defeat," and seemed delighted to allude to it as "the first reverse to our arms since the Maryland campaign commenced." Of course this "reverse" was attributable to North-Carolinians, under a North-Carolina commander. Had they been troops from some other State, would the "reverse" have been heralded with such a flourish of trumpets? Perhaps the following will answer the question:

Quite recently—since "Ramseur's defeat"—Pegram's Battery was captured and the troops supporting it repulsed. I know not that those engaged were to blame. I have no reason to think they did not fight bravely and do all that brave men could under the circumstances; but these same newspapers touched the affair gingerly—cut it off with a paragraph—and never mentioned the States from which the troops came—a sure indication that they were not from North-Carolina; and they were not. A few days afterwards about 5,000 North-Carolinians, with a few other troops, encountered about 17,000 of the enemy at Gravelly Hill, not far from Richmond, drove them back several miles, and killed, wounded and captured many; and yet, if the editors of these papers have ever heard of the fight at Gravelly Hill, I am not aware that they have ever communicated the information to their readers.

In fact one or more of the Richmond papers, some days after the affair at Bethel, seemed to have

doubts about any such battle having been fought at all. Was it because North-Carolina troops, principally, were engaged?

More recently still. On Sunday, 21st of August last, our forces were repulsed in their assault on the enemy's lines near Petersburg, on the Weldon Railroad. Virginia papers told us that the repulse was attributable to the conduct—one of them says, "the shameful conduct" of a certain brigade which gave way at a critical moment, and could not be rallied; but they told us not what brigade it was, nor have they yet done so. We all know it was not a North-Carolina brigade.

On the following Thursday the enemy was attacked near Reams' Station, on the same road, driven back into their fortifications—their fortifications stormed and carried—and the Yankee hosts scattered like chaff before our invincible soldiers. Thanks to that good and great-hearted man, Gen. Lee, he tells us in his official dispatch that Cook's, McRae's and Lane's North-Carolina brigades, with Pegram's artillery, composed the assaulting columns.

Had not Gen. Lee stated these facts, it is quite likely none of the Virginia papers would have troubled their readers with the information.

North Carolina, too, has fewer high officers than any other State that has furnished so many troops. But few of her sons have been promoted, and too many of these few, here, as well as elsewhere, have apparently been selected, not so much with reference to qualifications as to partizan predilections. Our troops, for the most part, must fight under officers

from other States; and though this does not effect their willingness to fight, they cannot help considering it an indignity to their State.

Look, too, to the present position of one of her most cherished sons, Gen. D. H. Hill, the hero of Bethel. For nearly a year he has been without a command, but he has not been idle. He has suffered no fine drawn military etiquette, to which victory and thousands of lives are too frequently sacrificed and the cause itself put in jeopardy, to interfere with his love for and duty to his country. He has, in many recent battles, taken part, sometimes assigned to a command for the special occasion. His case is awakening indignation against his pursuers, and creating a corresponding sympathy for him, in the hearts of his countrymen throughout the Confederacy. He is now more honored, more respected and looked to with more trustfulness, than those who would hold him down. He has proven that he has the cause of his country at heart, and that *self* is not considered. He knows his countrymen will do him justice, and lets not the injustice done him by malice or envy or other cause, interfere with his love of duty. He had too much of the "go ahead," and too little of the "falling back" qualifications, to render him a fitting person for special favors and place him in the safe line of promotion. Posterity will do him justice, and, like his adopted State, he is content with this.

North-Carolina, too, has more volunteers, in proportion to her population, than any other State; and the Conscript law has been more rigidly en-

forced in her borders than in those of any other State; yet, because there are some deserters and skulkers in her western counties, more than half of whom are from other States, she must be stigmatized as "the tory State," and the *Habeas Corpus* act must be suspended for her special benefit. One half of Virginia may set up for itself and join Lincoln, and hundreds of her Eastern citizens may have taken the oath of allegiance to Abraham the last; yet we hear nothing of tories there. Cotton and sugar planters "down South" may take the oath of allegiance and cultivate their own lands with what were formerly their own negroes, by giving the Yankees one-half of the products; yet we are not told of any tories there. North-Carolina must be made the scape-goat to bear off the sins of the other States, to gratify official spleen, partisan malice and envious hearts. She can well afford to act in this capacity; she can well endure the contemptible scoffs and sneers of her traducers, for she knows the sun of her fame shines but the more brightly, in contrast with their dark conduct towards her, and that she is so far beyond their puny shafts that, but for pity, she could smile complacently upon them. The truth of history, she knows, will do her justice, and conscious of this, she moves along serene and undisturbed, though she lets fall a tear of pity for the depravity of those assailing her. She asks no artificial bolstering, no high-wrought eulogies of venal pens and hireling scribblers. She would blush at any notoriety given her by such means, and in her honest pride would denounce

such false glitter, knowing it was not glory. She cares not that abuse of her is made a stepping stone to court-favor and promotion. She knows that all such will soon find their level, unfathomably beneath her. She does her duty, fully, bravely, nobly, and is satisfied to bide her time until the demoralization and enviousness of the present day shall have given place to a fairer, less prejudiced and less corrupt era.

One other instance. At the battle of Gettysburg a certain brigade was hoisted to the top round of the ladder of praise for having stormed and carried a portion of the enemy's works. It is needless to say what State these troops were from; they were not from North-Carolina, or we should never have heard of the grand achievement. The Virginia papers piled Pelion upon Ossa, and day by day bore up material to add to the length, breadth and height of the stupendous pile.

And what are the facts? The works were stormed and carried in spite of a few straggling Yankees left behind, the "grand army" having evacuated the place and commenced its retreat. There had been, but a little time before, a heavy force there, and had it remained until our assaulting columns arrived it is highly probable that few or none of the assailants would have escaped. In that case, had they been North-Carolina troops, it would have been a blunder. But honor to the brave officers and men engaged, for they expected formidable opposition; and I mention the affair merely to show with what facility Virginia editors can magnify mole

hills into mountains when certain troops are spoken of, and reduce mountains to mole hills when other troops form their theme. Had North-Carolina troops stormed these works, the whole affair would most likely have been considered a ludicrous joke; or an attempt might have been made to create the impression that they knew the works were abandoned, and sought glory which they knew would be bloodless.

To add insult to injury, it is also sometimes intimated that the North-Carolina troops are put in the front of the fight, in order that other troops behind them may prevent their running away; but none of them have ever yet been made to fall while other troops charged over them. Ask Gen. Lee and other honest officers why they are so frequently put in the front, and they will tell you, because they are reliable. At Yorktown North-Carolina troops were placed in front, and in the retreat from that place they brought up the rear. Thus was the post of honor and of danger assigned them in both cases.

Quite recently—O, tell it not in Gath, nor publish it in the streets of Richmond!—these same Virginia papers, for purposes best known, perhaps, to themselves, have spoken well of the “honor” and “conservatism” of North-Carolina. “*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*.” Still they say nothing of the bravery of our soldiers.

If a man has reviled, abused, and spoken contemptuously of you through a series of years, or slighted and ignored you, and all at once begins to praise you, can you regard it as complimentary?

Can you believe him sincere? Would you not naturally suppose he had some sinister motive for his sudden change? If you are wise you will watch him with increased vigilance.

It must be mortifying, too, to every true son of North-Carolina to see our own State papers copying these articles, and expressing thanks and grateful feelings for them; just as a child who has been scolded, is pleased by a kind word from the one who had scolded it. It is too much like the whipped spaniel that will turn and lick the hand that smote him, for a kind pat on the head. No; let them abuse her—it is her praise: their praise is her bane. Sordid motives sometimes prompt the language of compliment. Political considerations often do the same. Spite at one party not unfrequently suggests praise of another, when neither is regarded with any kind feelings, the show of kindness being put on for party purposes—to dupe one into antagonism with another. North-Carolina has too much sense to be thus duped, and too much penetration not to see the serpent coiled beneath the rose. She is above calling upon her defamers to prove her good character. She can afford to despise both them and their testimony, well knowing they will have no weight with an impartial historian. Conscious rectitude can wait its vindication; conscious guilt seeks for props and stays, and would deceive the world by creating an impression of its innocence, even by pulling down the innocent and building itself upon the ruins. The guilty are generally the first accusers, in order to divert suspicion from themselves.

To prevent their own conduct being disscussed, they had rather discuss and draw public attention to that of others.

North-Carolina rests her fame upon her *deeds*—not upon her words. It is not necessary for her to defame others. She is willing to award praise to all who deserve it. She seeks the injury of none, and she has no fears that others can injure her.—Calm and unmoved she pursues the even tenor of her way, appreciating her friends and passing by her foes with silent contempt, mingled with pity for the envy of some and the malice of others. The groundless prejudices of those high in authority, weigh no more with her than the paltry attacks or slights of petty newspaper scribblers, puffed up sub-officials, and dastardly tools of would-be tyrants.

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